

# **Technical Advisory Committee for the Raccoon Creek Partnership**

Meeting Minutes – 12/15/2011

Action Items are Underlined

In Attendance: Amy Mackey (RCP), Kimberly Brewster (RCP), Sarah Landers (RCP), Mary Ann Borch (ODNR-DMRM), Kaabe Shaw (ODNR-DMRM), Mike McAvoy (ODNR-DMRM), Lynn Holtzman (Hocking College), Pam Stachler (US Forest Service), Mitch Farley, Natalie Kruse (OU Voinovich School/RCP), Jen Bowman (OU Voinovich School),

The meeting was called to order at 9:10am. Meeting location: Voinovich School, The Ridges, Bldg 22

## **Agenda Item Number 1: Begin Meeting, Welcome, Introductions**

## **Agenda Item Number 2: Watershed Coordinator Updates – Amy Mackey**

Raccoon Creek Watershed Coordinator, Amy Mackey, informed the group that since the last TAC meeting fish sampling was completed for the year 2011. There were a total of 8 boat sites and 13 long line sites. There was conversation by the group regarding the new boat and the hard work which was put into building it. It was suggested that the boat be named. Recently Amy has begun working on identifying bugs from the 2011 MAIS sites. When all sites are IDed, all data will be entered into the DOW spreadsheet. Amy passed around news articles highlighting recent RCP events that garnered media coverage, including participation in Piketon's Science Alliance and a chestnut tree planting. Starting to work on end-of-the-year reporting for Harble Griffith 319 and Coordinator grants.

## **Agenda Item #3: RC Water Quality Specialist and AmeriCorps Update – Sarah Landers, Kim Brewster, Kristin Kindler**

Sarah Landers, Raccoon Creek Water Quality Specialist, began by summarizing recent water quality sampling events and noted the rains that have occurred since early November kept the Raccoon Creek crew in the office until just this week. Almost all of the 2011 chemical sampling scheduled in the water quality monitoring plan has been completed and will conclude with sampling West Branch long term monitoring the week of December 19<sup>th</sup>. East Branch Phase II and East Branch Phase III projects have both been sampled 3 times for post construction monitoring so far in 2011. At the East Branch Phase II site all 3 steel slag leach beds (SSLB's) were discharging pH in the range of 12.70 to 13. At the Kern Hollow site the sand filter is full, but is not being diverted into the newly dug culvert between the sand filter and the slag bed. The slag bed has some water, but no longer has standing water on the slag. At the East Branch Phase III site the pH was around a 12.80 for each of the two SSLBs. Discharge from field data still needs to be calculated, but the Raccoon Creek sampling crew noted that the discharge from both beds should be much higher. The valves were not adjusted because there was still downstream sampling to be completed that same day. Amy Mackey also pointed out that the SSLB on the right (facing the SSLB's) had some erosion going into the SSLB over the liner. Going back to the discharge issue, Mitch Farley suggested that there may be clogs do to sediment since we have had so much rain. Mike McAvoy suggested that it is possible that the pipes could be clogged or that there is an issue with

the system. He recommended flushing the valves and have one person flushing the valves and another person at the SSLB combined outlet to observe and report the discharge. The Raccoon Creek sampling crew will do this before the spring. Kaabe brought up that in the spring there might be maintenance on the project since it is within the first year of construction. For this maintenance the valves will be shut off to the SSLBs and Mike McAvoy will find out how much sediment is on the beds. He will also bring a level to see if the periscope pipes are too high.

Kim Brewster began the AmeriCorps update discussing the planting of 67 chestnut trees at the Kern Hollow (East Branch Phase II) site. Other trees were planted at the Waterloo Aquatic Education Center. The trees were a donation from Ohio University and the Chestnut Tree Foundation. Kim announced that there is at workday this Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at the Waterloo Aquatic Education Center. The building is going to be cleaned and winterized and anyone is welcome to help.

#### **Agenda Item #4: 2012 Monitoring Plan – DRAFT – Sarah Landers and All**

Sarah is currently working on the 2012 water quality monitoring plan. Long term monitoring sites will be included for twice annual sampling for high and low flows. Post construction sampling will continue for East Branch Phase II and Phase III. Post construction sampling will be scheduled for summer 2012 upon completion of Harble Griffith Phase I and Orland Gob Pile. East Branch Phase I post maintenance sampling will be completed following completion of maintenance projects. Post construction sampling will be scheduled for the end of the year if 2012 projects are completed (Flint Run Wetland, Middleton Run, and Lake Latrobe). Sarah is going to draft the 2012 water quality monitoring plan as well as a 2012 maintenance plan and email to the group for input.

Pam Stachler brought up that the 2006 forest plan is being reviewed. The East Branch Phase I, II, and III projects are located on Wayne National Forest property and the forest area also includes maintenance projects in the Monday Creek Watershed. Part of the forest project involves a soil and water evaluation that is being undertaken by Pam Stachler and the new soil scientist. Pam would like to share this data with watershed groups and ODNR and Pam will send the evaluation information and photos to Mary Ann Borch. Pam Stachler and Kaabe Shaw are also going to set up a meeting together to discuss some sites in the Monday Creek watershed.

#### **Agenda Item #5: Possible Partnership with Hocking College / Quail Forever – Prairie Planting – Amy Mackey, Lynn Holtzman**

Wildlife Biologist and Hocking College Professor, Lynn Holtzman was invited to the TAC meeting to discuss a potential opportunity for prairie restoration on reclamation projects to use a grass seed mix that would provide habitat for quail. This potential opportunity was discussed with Amy Mackey when she made a presentation to Lynn's class at Hocking College in November. Lynn has a wetland and prairie restoration background and has experience working around Lake Snowden in Lee Township and with private landowners in Waterloo Township doing prairie restoration for quail. A Quail Forever chapter was started at Hocking College and the Fish and Wildlife Service heard they were doing work on restoring quail habitat and offered financial assistance for purchase of seed and planting. Hocking

College students have been doing the planting. There is a possibility that \$10,000 could be available for restoration projects in Southeast Ohio through the Fish and Wildlife Service. Lynn asked if Raccoon Creek would be willing to try to do prairie restoration for quail on a reclaim site. Middleton Run was suggested, however Mike McAvoy met with OSU extension last month to discuss using a seed mix on these reclaim sites that would be beneficial to restoring the local population of native North American bees. The OSU extension researcher thought that the Middleton Run reclaim site would be ideal for a bee habitat. There is still discussion going on to determine if the bee seed mix will meet the needs of the Division and the quail mix could also be analyzed. Lynn Holtzman is going to email the composition of the seed mix to Amy Mackey, who will then forward the information to Mike McAvoy. The group discussed the possibility of mixing the different seeds to provide both habitats for quail and bees. Mary Ann Borch asked Lynn what is different about the quail mix from the mix that is currently used. Lynn explained that the native prairie grasses are important because they provide stratification. Grasses we currently use are sod forming grasses, which are used to prevent erosion, but the sod eliminates diversity of grassland birds. Stratification is needed in grasslands for birds to find their niches. As the conversation wrapped up Mike McAvoy let the group know that OSU Extension has first dibs at Middleton Run if their seed mix is acceptable.

### **Agenda Item #6: OSM Grant Applications for 2012 (Middleton, Flint Run Wetland, Lake Latrobe – pick 2) – Sarah Landers, Amy Mackey, Kaabe Shaw**

Kaabe Shaw informed Amy Mackey and Sarah Landers that for the OSM grants the Flint Run Wetland and Lake Latrobe projects are going to be combined into a single grant (each project will be about \$350,000) and the Middleton Run project will be its own grant. All three projects will be covered by two grant applications. Sarah and Amy have templates for the grants and will email Kaabe for information needed for the OSM grants and Kaabe will email ROE copies to Amy.

### **Agenda Item #7: Current and upcoming AMD Project Updates – ODNR & All**

#### **-Begin Current Projects-**

#### **Harble Griffith Phase I**

Kaabe Shaw announced that with the record rain this fall this project has fallen behind and will be completed in the spring of 2012. Mass grading has been completed and 70% of the spoil piles have been seeded and the seed is likely going to be dormant for the winter. Mitch Farley interjected that there are usually better germination rates when seeding is completed after December 15<sup>th</sup> due to the nature of fall weather. Kaabe also mentioned that there is some site erosion and the seed has been washed around due to the heavy rains this fall. There was discussion that the site might then need to be re-seeded in the spring. The wetland is going to be planted in the spring. A small pond was created in Mike Schooley's field and Mike McAvoy will be updating the project plans accordingly. The bottom burrow and access road has been mulched at the project and no more arrow heads have been found at the project site.

## **East Branch Phase I**

Mike McAvoy began that all pipe work has been completed on the beds, except for site 8 along SR 56. The pipes will not be replaced for a while because all of the slag was cemented and the contractor was taking out large chunks. The trenches are going to need back-filled and refilled with fresh slag, therefore water is going to be diverted from the bed for a few months to complete the work. Under the current contract the slag is going to be brought in for site 8 and a few feet of fresh slag is going to be added to each bed for \$100,000 to top off each bed. Mitch Farley asked whether the use of a slag crusher was considered. Mike McAvoy had looked into the option but it would be difficult to get it to the sites and it was not a cost effective option. The slag is going to be going into the beds in February and the work should be completed by the end of February.

## **Lake Milton**

All cell pipes were televised and were clear, except the pipe on the right side was crushed. The pipe was replaced and cleared and the agri-drains are due in. The water in Lake Milton was high and water is being delivered. Raccoon Creek Partnership is free to sample from now until the springtime to see if the slag is working. For now, field samples are ok and alkalinity is needed. Natalie Kruse has a digital titrator and Amy is going to go out to Lake Milton and sample the outlet at the weir the following week. The water needs to be kept below the slag and Amy may need to adjust valves.

## **Flint Run East**

There will be a 6 inch discharge to the AMD ditch to transport alkalinity and then slag is going to be swapped later in the year. There was some discussion about cattle being loose in the area. The fence is down and there might be discussions taking place between the landowner and Division of Wildlife. Also, Jaymar is low on priority list, but pipes will be cleaned out.

## **Pierce Run**

Mike McAvoy has the design essentially complete. For the slurry wall the inlets will be replaced with concrete and they will not be side-loaded like the current plastic inlets, which tipped. The sandbar will be removed and a rock-mat created that will support itself. At this point we have no idea how much this project is going to cost. This is partially because this is a unique project and some of the potential bidders have said that we could not afford them to do this project. Mike talked with Ben McCament and determined that if the bids exceed \$400,000 to fix this project then they may throw out the bids and have two options: (1) Make it a seasonal system and don't completely abandon and (2) Put a small doser in Oreton. If we went forward with this plan B then the pipe would need to be extended to catch seasonal water. Bids should be in by the middle of March or April 2012. Also, the low water crossing will be brought down so it doesn't wash out.

## **Orland Gob Pile**

There still needs to be dirt moved back by the wetland and should be done in a ½ day of time. The site is covered with 2 to 3 feet and there was plenty of borrow. Winterizing will consist of mulch and silt

fences and the spring permanent re-vegetation will occur. The rock channel will also be extended 40 feet and will need a spur.

**-End Current Projects-**

**-Begin 2012 Projects-**

Since 2011 work is resuming at the first good weather in 2012; the 2012 projects will be planned for the summer, once the remaining 2011 projects are completed, or near completion to prevent overlap and to not put too much pressure on ODNR staff.

The design for the Middleton Run project will be done between Christmas and New Year's. There are from a few feet to 14 feet of clay around the sites, but we don't yet know how hot it is and so we don't know yet if we will need to lime it. Construction is tentatively going to begin in late June or early July. Lake Latrobe and Flint Run are going to be combined into one OSM grant. For Lake Latrobe we are going to take out the dam and see what we have and cover it. At Flint Run there is recon scheduled on December 22<sup>nd</sup> for a walkabout to look at the beaver dams. For 2012 these two projects (Middleton Run and Lake Latrobe / FR Wetland) will be it for the year.

**-End 2012 Projects-**

Jen Bowman is getting ready to prepare the 2011 NPS report and asked whether the new information regarding the maintenance projects should be added to the NPS reports. The group determined that it is important to capture that data on maintenance and put it into the NPS reports. The maintenance for passive treatment takes a massive amount of money to fix and maintain these systems. This would be important data to take into consideration thinking ahead to 1/1/2024 when SMCRA expires. We need dedicated funding available for maintenance. If the funding goes away then we need to put back money for maintenance. The NPS provides public awareness of construction and maintenance and is a permanent record of what we have been doing with respect to our projects.

**Agenda Item #8: AEP Project Updates – Natalie Kruse and Jen Bowman**

Natalie Kruse began by presenting graphs depicting the alkalinity downstream of the Carbondale Doser. The graphs showed that at HF131 and in the Doser Channel are now net alkaline, but have been net acidic several times during the past year, mostly due to the dosing rate being dialed down for the last year. Several samples at HF131 were net acidic until June 2011. The dosing rate is presently dialed back up, but the alkalinity is gone on the first turn down the creek. It was recommended by Natalie that we need to dose at a high enough rate, possibly 1,000 lbs per day and the rate could be different in the wet vs. dry season. Natalie Kruse continued that at River Mile 5.5 some alkaline subwatersheds come in and we don't see major hits until River Mile 6 where Carbondale is killing the stream. This year's IBI we didn't get the mouth of Hewett Fork (Waterloo), but 2010 and 2011 IBI scores were the lowest since treatment started. IBI scores are lower, but not diversity. The MAIS score also took a hit in

2010 in the first couple of miles below the doser, but rebounded in 2011. Natalie informed the group that we can't crank down the doser and keep fish downstream. Natalie shared the data with Nate Schlater, Monday Creek Water Quality Specialist and responsible for doser maintenance. The channel needs accumulation to allow for residence time. In January we can shovel out some of the accumulation spots. There was a concern about wasting material. Mitch Farley brought up the point that there is material in it that does not react and recommended to not worry about wasting material by shoveling the channel.

Jen Bowman is working on a new AEP proposal. The new proposal will include funding for RCP coordination (Raccoon Creek Coordinator match funding), the Boat of Knowledge, Water Monitoring, and lots of money for student research and projects. It was brought up that a MOU to address liability for the Boat of Knowledge should be created between ODNR and OU to prevent ODNR for holding liability. At the end of the meeting, photos of the electroshocking boat were displayed and Sarah Landers will be copying photos to a CD for Mitch Farley.

### **Agenda Item #9: New Business / Announcements - All**

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

**End Meeting – Next meeting: Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> 9:00 am, The Ridges, Building 22 – Room 214**